

## VINDICATION

C F

Free and Unprescribed Prayer:

IN SOME

## REMARKS

UPON

Dr. *NEWTON*'s Sermon*On the Liturgy of the Church of England,  
according to the Will of Mr. Hutchins.*INSCRIBED to the TRUSTEES of  
Mr. *Hutchins*'s Charity.

---

By *JOHN PHELPS*.

---

Εἰ τις με ελεγξαι και παραησαι μοι, οτι εκ  
 ορθως επιλαμβανω η πρασσω, δυναται, και-  
 ρων μεταησεται, ζητω γαρ την αληθειαν,  
 υψης κδεις πωποτε εδλαβη ελαπτεται δε ο  
 επιμενων επι της εαυτε απατης και αγνοιας.  
 Marc. Antonin.

---

L O N D O N

Printed for M. COOPER in Paternoster Row. 1746.

(Price One Shilling.)





To the Trustees of Mr. *Hutchins's*  
Charity.

Gentlemen,

**A**S your Importunity is assign'd  
by Dr. Newton as the chief  
Reason for printing his Sermon on  
the Liturgy, it is an undeniable  
Fact that you have been not only Ac-  
cessaries but Principals, in publick-  
ly propagating a great deal of Con-  
tempt and Insult upon the Method  
of free and unprescribed Prayer ;  
the Dr. it seems would have been  
content with having preached the  
Sermon, and did not print it, till  
upon your continued Application it  
was given up to you ; you cannot  
therefore reasonably take it amiss  
from me, either as Men, or as Pro-  
testants, when I frankly tell you  
you have acted an uncharitable  
Part, in being the Means of pub-  
lishing so violent an Invective a-  
gainst

gainst a Manner of Worship, which, from your excessive Approbation of such a Discourse, I am persuaded you do not understand; I will take the Liberty to add, that it is your indispensable Duty to examine with all Seriousness, the Foundations of your extraordinary Zeal for set and Prescribed Forms, and against free and unprescribed Prayer. And for fear lest any of you who may not be acquainted with Greek, should suspect there is any latent Reflection contained in my Motto, I think myself obliged to present you with a Translation of it, which is as follows.

‘ If any Man is able to confute  
 ‘ me, and make it appear to me,  
 ‘ that I do not apprehend, or act  
 ‘ aright, I will gladly be convinced,  
 ‘ for I seek the Truth, by which no  
 ‘ Man ever was injured, but he is  
 ‘ injured that persisteth in his own  
 ‘ Error and Ignorance.’

A N  
A N S W E R

T O

Dr. *NEWTON*'s Sermon,  
&c.

**W**HEN I attended on the  
last annual Sermon on  
the establish'd Liturgy,  
according to the Donation of Mr.  
*Hutchins*, the positive Assertions of  
the Preacher, the absurd and incon-  
clusive Arguments by which he at-  
tempted to fix the Charge of In-  
coherence, Absurdity, and Unin-  
telligibleness, on that Method of  
Prayer which is approved and prac-  
tised by all his protestant Brethren  
in this Kingdom, both of the Esta-  
blishment in the *North*, and the  
B protestant



protestant Dissenters in *South-Britain*; together with the censorious and uncharitable Reflections so plentifully thrown out against them, made me wish that the Sermon might be published, that there might be an Opportunity of vindicating our Worship from those injurious Aspersions with which the Dr. had loaded it, in one of the most publick Audiences in the City and Kingdom; and though there be no Attempt to Argument in the Dedication to the Gentlemen that are Trustees of Mr. *Hutchins's* Charity, I cannot but take Notice of that ill-tim'd Modesty which appears in it. I am at a Loss to conceive what Reason can be assigned for his apparent Backwardness to the Publication of this Discourse: Undoubtedly as there is but one of these Sermons preached in the Year, there was Notice sufficient given for

for composing; and if upon Recollection any thing appear'd to him inconclusive or dubious, That would be an undeniable Reason for not publishing it at all: To what Purpose was it then to represent it as extorted by the Importunity of the Trustees, to say, *I deferred it in hopes that you would think better of it, or upon your continued Application it is given up to you*; Or where is the Consistency for a Man to be so excessively bashful in the Dedication, and so positive and magisterial in the Sermon? He begins his Discourse with a Principle to which I heartily assent, *Prayer is a Duty necessarily arising from the Relation of Man to God; and Prayer is as much our Duty as we are Members of Society, as private Prayer is our Duty, as we are individual and single Persons.* I acknowledge the Obligation both of

*private* and *publick* Prayer as arising from the Constitution of intelligent Beings. Gratitude I conceive to be the primary Foundation of our being obliged thereto, because Consciousness of having derived Existence, and of continually receiving Benefits from the Creator, are the first Ideas in the Order of Nature that dictate our being obliged to the Exercise of Prayer. Veneration or Adoration of this glorious, all-perfect, and gracious Being, is, I apprehend, the next thing which arises from the Law of our Frame, and in both these parts of Prayer, it cannot be disputed, but that the first of the human Species were obliged to exercise themselves equally with those of any succeeding Times, but it was impossible there should be any *prescribed Forms* for publick Prayer till such Time as Writing was invented,



invented, which, as far as I could ever learn, was not till after many Ages, and most probably not till the Time of *Moses*, a long Period of two thousand Years: Publick Prayer is allowed to have been a Duty by the Law of Nature, a Duty evidently arising from the Relation of Creatures to their Creator: It must then have been either totally neglected all this Time, which is a very shocking Supposition, or else it must have been performed in that manner which it is the Design of the Dr.'s Sermon to represent as no Prayer at all.

A Revelation from God to direct Mankind in the Discharge of their Duty towards him was unquestionably always desirable, and therefore it was a commendable Request in the Disciples, *Lord teach us to pray*; but to say as the Dr. does, *p. 8.* that our Lord *in them*

*them hath taught us not only the true Object of Worship, but also the best Method of worshipping him; not only what Petitions we are to offer at the Throne of Grace, but also the Form and Manner wherein we are to offer them, is saying a great deal more than he can justify. As for the Object of Worship there is no Discovery made at all, neither does our Lord so properly teach them, or us, the Petitions we are to offer, as exemplify in Miniature the Substance of what we are to enlarge upon in the various Parts of Prayer: As to the Form and Manner wherein we are to offer them, the Dr. cannot mean what the Words seem to intend, that we are to offer these Petitions and none else, for then there would be no occasion for any Liturgy at all; if he means that it is unlawful*

*to*

to vary from the Method of petitioning laid down in this Specimen or Summary of Prayer given by our Lord, Facts will be against him as well as Reason ; for the Apostles did not confine themselves thereto, neither will there appear to be any Absurdity from the Nature of Things in varying from it ; neither does this Directory contain any new Discovery in any one Branch of Prayer ; and though it be a perfect Pattern of the various parts which enter into the Composition of Prayer on the Foot of the Law of Nature, yet there is one essential part of a Christian Prayer wanting, which indeed could not take place till after our Lord's Ascension, which is that of offering it through a Mediator.

*And yet (says the Dr. p. 9.) there are Men who pretend to be so much wiser than the rest of Mankind,*



kind, as to want none of these *Assistances and Instructions*; they are for pouring out their Spirit in *extemporary Prayer*, and utterly condemn all *Forms*. Who those sort of People are he intends as *pretending to be so much wiser than others*, I cannot imagine; I never met with any Believer of Christianity, but what professed to be thankful for every part of the Revelation, and particularly acknowledged the Usefulness of the Lord's Prayer, as a comprehensive Summary of Prayer in general, and allowed the same of every Prayer we meet with either in the Old Testament or in the New. I know of none that prefer praying without a *prescribed Form*, but what would desire, as far as they are applicable to their Cases and Occasions, to make use of the same Expressions as they did: but I must ask

ask the Dr's Pardon if I cannot agree to his making a Conclusion from the *Forms of Prayer* recorded in Scripture, in favour of *Forms of Prayer* or Liturgies of human Composition, as though these had any Pretensions to the like Regard, or that any Set of Christians however dignified or distinguish'd, have any manner of Right to demand the same Respect: They are at Liberty to compose what *Forms* they please, and to use them in Conjunction with those that approve them, but by no means to impose them on others, or to restrain them from any different Method, which they apprehend more effectually to answer the great End, and Design of publick Prayer.

If the Dr. will please to review *Eccles. v. 2.* he will find it either quite foreign to his Purpose, or directly against him; for if it be  
C                      intended

intended only of making Vows, it has nothing to do with Prayer in the Sense in which the Dr. is treating of it, if it be meant of Prayer in general, it is a Testimony point-blank against him, and necessarily implies that it was both lawful and customary to pray without a prescribed Form, and only forbids rash and undeliberate Expressions; it enjoins Seriousness and Devotion, in opposition to precipitate and inconsiderate Prayer.

Neither is he more happy in his Quotation from the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, *Ecclus. xviii. 23. Before thou prayest prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.* For neither the Lawfulness, nor Expediency of set Forms of Prayer follows from what the Jewish Writer here says, the Meaning whereof is no more than this, that a Man that is about to pray



pray ought first to consider what he is going to pray for, as to the Fitness of its being requested, and the most proper Expressions to be used on the Occasion, for on a Deficiency in either of these Respects he may be justly said to *tempt the Lord, i. e.* to despise or offend God: But does this Advice determine in favour of *set Forms of Prayer*? By no means, I should much rather conclude that it affords a very good Argument in behalf of Prayer without a *set or prescribed Form*.

As to the Form of imploring the Blessing of God upon the People, *Numb.* vi. 24. x. 35, 36. of Prayer on Occasion of an uncertain Murder, *Deut.* xxi. 7, 8. or of him that offered the first Fruits that are commanded by the Law of *Moses*, it was certainly the Duty of the Subjects of that Law to use them, and what is to be inferred from hence? Not

that because God has a Right to in-join the use of set and prescribed Forms, that therefore Men have the same Right, this would be to assert a Claim which indeed Papists have the Assurance to set up for, but is absolutely inconsistent with the Modesty of Protestants, who can no other way vindicate themselves in separating from the Antichristian Ufurpations of the Church of *Rome*, but by adhering to the Liberty of private Judgment. Seeing then they ~~disclaim~~<sup>claim</sup> all Pretensions to Infallibility (a Pretension absolutely necessary for every Body of Men that would arrogate to themselves the Power of *prescribing* to others) how can such as acknowledge themselves destitute of this necessary Qualification, pretend to an Authority to dictate to their Christian Brethren the *Forms of Prayer* in which they are to address their heavenly Father! Or can they

they produce the least Shadow of Argument for such pretended Authority, but what is borrowed from the *Romish* Magazine, and by virtue of which the Papists, with much more Consistency, and a far better Grace, will fix on them those contemptuous Appellations, those Ecclesiastical Scarecrow-Words, Schismatick, Heretick, Fanatick, Enthusiast, &c. with which certain protestant Divines have been pretty free in branding those that disclaim their Authority, and therefore dissent from their Communion.

But to go on; *Nor were there ever any Christians* (says the Dr. p. 13.) *who questioned and opposed the Use of set Forms of Prayer till a Century or two ago*, I know of none that think it unlawful to use a *precomposed Form* in the Congregation, but what would the Dr. infer from it? Would he insist that the  
*Forms*



*Forms prescribed* to be used in the *South* of our Island are such as ought not to be objected to, or that Christians are obliged to use none but *set Forms* in publick Worship, or that they always from the beginning of Christianity used such and no other? Would he argue from the Lawfulness of *set Forms* in general, to the Goodness or Propriety of our established Forms in particular? This is a very wild and inconclusive Way of reasoning; He will readily allow that Forms of Prayer may be unjustifiable, such as those of the Papists to Saints and Angels; and is there not a Possibility that Prayers composed in *England* may from the Matter of their Composition, be such as cannot be used consistently with a good Conscience? I appeal to the Dr. himself, whether he does not know a Church which has near forty Articles, which must be subscribed to  
by

by all that would have Institution and Induction, in which Number the Doctrinal Articles are absolutely Predestinarian. Upon a moderate Computation does one Clergyman in fifty believe these Doctrines? With what Integrity then do these Divines subscribe them? And I believe it has always been a Misfortune attending Forms of Prayer drawn up for national Churches, that they contain Principles intended to support a particular System of Tenets, in consequence of which it must be supposed the Compilers will industriously insert those Principles, and frequently intermix them with the Prayers, which is evidently the Case of the Prayers and Collects of a certain Church.

As to *the universal Practice of the Church from the earliest Ages*, which he next asserts to be in his Favour, no Regard whatsoever ought to

to be had to the Ages of Antichristian Superstition and Popish Dark-  
 ness; for the Example of the Pa-  
 pists for a thousand or twelve hun-  
 dred Years back will be no better a  
 Plea for *prescribed Forms of Prayer*,  
 than it will be for having *publick*  
*Prayers* in an unknown Tongue:  
 and if we appeal to the first Ages,  
*Justin Martyr*, who lived in the  
 beginning of the second Century,  
 who professedly wrote a Vindica-  
 tion of Christianity against Heathen-  
 ism, tells us in his Account of the  
 Worship of those truly primitive  
 Christians, that the Minister pray'd  
 as the Mouth of the Congregation  
 and without a Form. His Words are,  
 in his Description of the Worship in  
 the Christian Assemblies on the first  
 Day of the Week, *Και ο προεσως ευχαρι-  
 σμοικως και ευχαρισιας, οση δυναμις αυτω, ανα-  
 πεμπει, και ο λαος επευρημει λεγων το αμην.*  
 And the Minister lifts up Prayers and  
 Thankf-



Thanksgivings, according to his Ability, and the People testify their Assent, by saying *Amen.* *Sares Lond. Ed. Folio 1722, p. 98.*

He comes next, *p. 14.* to argue from the Reason of the Thing, *A prescribed Form of Worship is not subject to the same Inconveniencies with extemporary Effusions; the great Danger of unpremeditated Prayer is, lest it should degenerate into a Rhapsody of Absurdities and Enthusiasm.* *Extemporary and unpremeditated* are with the Dr. Words synonymous, which is in effect to bring a very injurious Charge upon his Fellow-Christians who chuse to pray without a *prescribed Form.* How in the Name of Charity, does it follow, that because I don't chuse to be tied up to a *set Form* in Prayer, I should therefore pray without previous Meditation and Preparation? Is it not allowed on both

D

sides,

fides, that Prayer is a Duty? Are we not required both by Precepts and Examples without Number, to offer up our Prayers to God? And are we not commanded in *every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving to make known our Requests unto God? Phil. iv. 6.* Is not the Care of providing for our future Happiness the great, the only justifiable End of living? And does it not follow from hence, that we ought to study the divine Perfections, to be both frequent and fervent in our Addresses to God? And can we address the divine Being in a Language more suitable, or in Words more proper, than those which are to be learned from the Scripture? Let a Man peruse his Bible with a direct Intention of collecting the Descriptions of the divine Attributes as they occur, with the Definitions of the several Duties there enjoined, set  
them

them down under their respective Heads, and study them with some tolerable Measure of that Care and Diligence which becometh every Christian, and especially a Minister, and he may soon acquire a much better Capacity of expressing himself in his Addresses to God, either personally, or as the Mouth of others, than by the Assistance of any Forms that have been yet produced, or I believe ever will: And where will be the Danger, after such an habitual Preparation for the Exercise of Prayer, of Absurdities and Enthusiasm, which the Dr. represents as the probable Consequence of praying without a Form? Or where is the Necessity that a Man *must be an uncommon and powerful Master of Thought and Expression, who is able to speak on a sudden, and yet speak nothing improper in an Address to the Majesty of Heaven?* Let him



but faithfully study the divine Perfections, the Scriptures, and himself, and a Person of no uncommon Capacity may be prepared on any Occasion that may occur, which affects either the publick or any private Persons, to call upon God in a manner tending to Edification.

*A Man should be ashamed (says he in the next Sentence) of appearing with such indigested Crudities before his earthly Sovereign. I allow that indigested Crudities, Enthusiasm, and a Rhapsody of Absurdities are by no means Offerings proper to be made to God. And 'tis a very hard and unchristian Charge the Dr. would endeavour by these most flagrant Terms of Reproach to insinuate against his Fellow-Protestants and Fellow-Christians, who think it on many accounts more eligible to have their publick Prayers free and unprescribed. Such indeed are the assuming*

suming Airs of the established Clergy, that though perhaps not one in five hundred of them have ever condescended to honour our Churches with their Presence, yet many of them take the unwarrantable Liberty of condemning us unheard, and *Speak Evil of the Things they know not.*

But however, we are obliged to the Dr. for a little Relaxation of his Rigour in the next Sentence. *But if there should be nothing absurd and unbecoming,* 'tis well there is a Possibility of its being so, yet still it will be as bad on another Account, and if what is here asserted be true, the Practice of free Prayer must be given up. *The Audience* (says the Dr. p. 15.) *must first endeavour to understand the Words.* Agreed; and where is the Difficulty of that, for it is now granted that there may be nothing *absurd* in them: Must not  
the

the People that attend *Forms of Prayer* endeavour to *understand the Words* of such Prayers? Well, but something more is to be done, *then they must weigh and consider the Meaning of them.* Sure the Dr. is disposed to multiply Difficulties on our side of the Question; Pray where is the Difference betwixt *understanding the Words*, and *considering the Meaning of them?* But something else remains, *and then they must deliberate whether such Requests are proper for Persons in their Condition, before they can lawfully join in them.* Here, let it be particularly observed, is one Act of the Mind converted into three, for the sake of loading the Method of Praying without a *prescribed Form* with insuperable Difficulties; I will appeal to every Man of common Understanding, whether any greater Space is required for *understanding,*  
*weighing*



*weighing and considering, and deliberating on the Meaning and Propriety of the Expressions of the Minister in Prayer, than those natural and very short Pauses which are necessarily to be made betwixt the End of one Sentence and the beginning of another; or whether, by parity of Reason, according to this sort of arguing, the Dr. ought not to print every one of his Sermons before he preaches them, or else his Hearers will be bewilder'd in this very Wood of Difficulties, and be able to make no manner of Improvement by his most elaborate Performances; for according to him, the Hearer must first endeavour to understand the Words, then weigh and consider the Sense and Meaning of them, and then deliberate whether what is delivered be agreeable to Scripture and Reason, before he can be capable of receiving any Benefit from his*  
Discourse,

Discourse, and by this time (I might as well have said, *and then*) after the first Sentence or two, the Dr. proceeding on in his Sermon, the poor Hearer is distanced, and the Dr. got quite out of Sight.

But what gives an incontestable Attestation to the Lawfulness of praying without a *prescribed Form*, is, that we have several Prayers of considerable Length recorded in Scripture which were not read to the People, neither had the People any Copies to read when they joined in them, which the Dr. would persuade us is the only possible Method for the Congregation to be able to join in Prayer; though with all Seriousness I would observe, that those that are not able to read, would upon this Scheme be sadly put to it, and I imagine incapable of joining in publick Prayers at all: But the Prayers I am speaking of were pronounc'd after  
the

the Method of *free Prayer*, which I presume would never have been done, if those imaginary Difficulties so solemnly stated by the Dr. had any manner of Reality in them. Such as these are the Prayers of *Solomon* at the Dedication of the Temple 2 *Chron.* vi. 14, &c. of *Exra* ix. 6, &c. and that in *Nehemiah* ix. 6, &c.

The next Step of the Dr's. is to set forth the Advantages attending his own Method of Prayer, which he so mightily extols, at the Expence and even to the Condemnation of the other. And first, he will have it that the Objection of its having a Tendency to *damp* or *quench our Devotion* is without any Foundation, so far from it, *that*, he says, *it rather assists and inflames it, the Matter and the Words are both prepared to our Hands, we know before what is to follow that we may law-*  

E

fully



*fully join in it, and no other Attention is required but to raise our Affections.* This last Sentence comes in but very oddly in this Place, the Design indeed is easily perceived, so far as it is a transient Allusion to what he had more explicitly observed before, in respect of the Difficulties of *understanding, weighing and considering, and deliberating* on the Words of a Prayer, which he imputes to the Method of praying without *a prescribed Form*, but as that has been already confuted, 'tis needless to repeat it; but if we take this last Sentence in Connection with what he is here treating of, it is in Effect a Confutation of himself; for the Objectors to *Forms* of Prayer as they tend to *damp and deaden* Devotion, lay the Strength of their Objection in their being so well known and so commonly repeated; Suppose a Man was never to hear  
above

above one or two Sermons from his Minister, how excellent soever he might think them the first or second hearing, it would become tedious to hear them five hundred times each. I believe there is no Man living but what would choose rather to hear one of inferior Abilities give him a variety of Discourses, than to be confined to the best Preacher in the World from whom he was never to hear above two or three; and from all the insight I am capable of procuring, either by considering it within my self, or by what I have heard from others, this is the universal Case of Mankind; neither can I conceive, that a Person supposed to be highly affected at the first or second hearing of a Discourse, could by any possible Endeavours ever keep up his Attention after many times hearing it, or be affected in any proportionable Degree as he was at first.

The Question he puts upon this is very extraordinary. *And let me ask, (says he, p. 16.) is not the Spirit of the Congregation equally stinted, whether the Minister pray in an extemporary or in a composed regular Form?* I readily answer no, in no degree of Comparison; if there be no Prayers to be used but those that are ready made to his Hands, and the Minister is never to intersperse any Petitions according to the infinite variety of Circumstances to which that part of the Church and the World is incident, the reasonable Expectations of having the publick Prayers accommodated to those perpetually altering Circumstances cannot be answered, and the most probable Effect in every Mind turn'd to Reflection and Devotion, would be rather to lament the general, vague, and indeterminate Petitions that are offered, instead of such as he might  
conceive



conceive would be incomparably more suitable, affecting, and interesting.

But I must go on to another Question. *And which is more fit and proper for the People to receive a Form of Prayer from the Wisdom and Authority of the whole Church, or to depend upon the Discretion of every single Minister?* I know of no *Wisdom* nor *Authority of the whole Church*. I know indeed a certain Country where they assert in one Article, that *the Church hath Power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and Authority in Controversies of Faith*, and in another, that *holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to Salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any Man*. Now as either one or the other of these Articles cannot be true, I own I think the former is not, and that

that agreeably to the other, which contains the Doctrine of the Right of private Judgment in every Christian, and is the only Principle whereby Protestants are to be justified in separating from the most unjust and tyrannical Usurpations of Papists over the Understandings and Consciences of Men, it is most clear and evident that it is both the Right and Duty of every Christian, to worship God in that manner which upon good Grounds appears most consonant to Scripture and Reason, that no greater or lesser Number of Christians have any Shadow of Authority to *prescribe* to others either the Matter or the Manner of their Worship, but every one is obliged as a Disciple and Subject of Christ, to associate with those religious Assemblies, in which the Worship of God is celebrated in a Method most correspondent

dent to the Intention of publick Worship.

In the same *page* it is asserted, that *a precomposed Form of Prayer is more for the Honour of Almighty God, expresses more Reverence and Devotion, preserves greater Propriety and Decency of Language, and in short surpasses extemporary Prayer, as much as sound Piety and Religion excels the Freaks and Rants of Fanaticism and Enthusiasm.* What a genteel Politeness and Delicacy of Style does this zealous Advocate for his own sort of Devotion breath! how crowded with such Ornaments is his Argumentation! *Freaks, Rant, Fanaticism, and Enthusiasm,* all in one piece of a Sentence! But soft and fair, I am not without Hopes that upon reconsidering the Subject he may wish he had not been quite so lavish of this sort of Compliments. God is most *ho-*  
*noured,*



noured, when he is most sincerely and devoutly worshipped, The Question then betwixt us being whether praying by *prescribed Forms*, or without, is most likely to excite Devotion, Good reasoning, and not dogmatical Assertion and contumelious Railing, will serve the Turn; the *Propriety of the Language* in which the Liturgy is composed, depended upon the Capacity of those that drew it up, it may not be possible at the Distance of two hundred Years to prove that there were, or were not Persons then living more capable, as to the Style, than the Compilers; but admitting that the Language was as good as that Age was capable of producing, certain it is that all living Languages are continually altering, and all Words are no more than arbitrary Signs of Ideas connected with those Sounds, which from the Introduction of particular

ticular Individuals at first were received and used by others as the mediums of imparting Sentiments from one to another, and so became generally understood by small Bodies and Societies of Men, which by degrees multiplied and grew up into Nations. As this is the only rational Origin to which we can trace back the many different national Languages, and the Genius of this Nation in particular, has discovered a remarkable Inclination to receive new Words, and to adopt them in the room of others, which they thought not so conveniently or so concisely adapted to express the Ideas they were intended to convey; and as our Acquaintance with the learned Languages has increased to a vast degree during this long period of two hundred Years, and our Commerce has been as greatly extended, we have commendably introduced a

F                      Multitude

Multitude of new Words taken from the ancient as well as modern Languages, and a proportionable number of old Words are of Course become obsolete and unintelligible to the common People, or which is altogether as bad, some of the old Words are still used, but in a very different, and sometimes direct contrary Signification, infomuch that it would not be difficult to compose a Prayer or a Discourse of those kind of Words out of the Liturgy, \* which if heard by the Learned, would be very difficultly understood; and to the Vulgar would be as unintelligible as the *Latin* Service is to the vulgar *Papists*. But as the dangerous tendency of *prescribed Forms of Prayer* cannot be expected to be so much attended to when represented by an Opposer of them, as when set forth by one of the greatest Ornaments of the Church that adheres to them, I shall  
 quote

\* See Appendix N<sup>o</sup>. 1.



quote an excellent Passage from the  
 learned Dr. *Prideaux*, which direct-  
 ly answers my purpose of shewing,  
 in the Light in which I am now ar-  
 guing, the monstrous Inconvenience  
 which necessarily follows the stick-  
 ing rigidly to ancient Forms. His  
 Words are in his Account of the Re-  
 ligion of the *Magians*. ‘ For all  
 ‘ their *Publick Prayers* are even to  
 ‘ this Day in the old *Persian Lan-*  
 ‘ guage, in which *Zoroastres* first  
 ‘ composed them above two thou-  
 ‘ sand two hundred Years since, of  
 ‘ which the common People do not  
 ‘ now understand one Word. And  
 ‘ in this Absurdity also have they the  
 ‘ Romanists Partakers with them.  
 ‘ When *Zoroastres* composed his Li-  
 ‘ turgy, the old *Persic* was then in-  
 ‘ deed the vulgar Language of all  
 ‘ those Countries, where this Litu-  
 ‘ rgy was used. And so was the *La-*  
 ‘ *tin* throughout all the *Western*  
 F 2 ‘ Empire,

‘ Empire, when the *Latin* Service  
 ‘ was first used therein. But when  
 ‘ the Language changed, they would  
 ‘ not consider, that the Change  
 ‘ which was made thereby in the rea-  
 ‘ son of the thing, did require that  
 ‘ a Change should be made in their  
 ‘ *Liturgy* also, but retained it the  
 ‘ same, after it ceased to be under-  
 ‘ stood, as it was before.—And  
 ‘ if that *Stiffness of Humour*, which  
 ‘ is now *among too many of us* against  
 ‘ *altering* any thing in *our Liturgy*  
 ‘ should continue, it must at last  
 ‘ bring us to the same pass. For all  
 ‘ Languages being *in fluxu*, they  
 ‘ do in every Age alter from what  
 ‘ they were in the former; and there-  
 ‘ fore as we do not now understand  
 ‘ the *English*, which was spoken by  
 ‘ our Ancestors three or four hun-  
 ‘ dred Years ago, so in all likeli-  
 ‘ hood will not our Posterity three  
 ‘ or four hundred Years hence un-  
 ‘ derstand

‘ derstand that which is now spoken  
 ‘ by us. And therefore should *our*  
 ‘ *Liturgy* be still continued without  
 ‘ any Change or Alteration, it will  
 ‘ then be as much in an unknown  
 ‘ Language as now the *Roman Ser-*  
 ‘ vice is to the Vulgar of that Com-  
 ‘ munion.’ *Prid. Con. p. 309.*  
*Ed. 9.*

But the Dr. will have it, *p. 17.*  
 that *a prescribed Form is better, not*  
*only for the People, but for the Mi-*  
*nisters too, for as it prevents any*  
*vain Ostentation of their Talents in*  
*the more learned, so it supplies the*  
*more ignorant with what perhaps*  
*they could ill compose of themselves;*  
 As for *vain Ostentation*, it is what  
 no good Man will be guilty of, but  
 then are not Ministers of *superior*  
*Abilities* cramp’d and fetter’d by  
 being tied down to old obsolete  
*Forms*, would their *superior Abili-*  
*ties* be of no Advantage towards ex-  
 citing



citing the Devotion and animating the Petitions of Christians? May we not as well argue that they are not useful, or perhaps that they are dangerous in Sermons; and therefore that the Method with respect to Sermons used at the time when the *Publick Prayers* were composed, might still be right, and so there must be no other preaching, as well as praying, but by *Form*, that is by *Homilies*.

The Distinction made by the Dr. in the last quoted Passage betwixt *the more learned and the more ignorant Ministers*, puts me in mind of the State of things in those times when the *Liturgy* and *Homilies* were compiled. It is a well known Fact in History, that the grossest and most stupid Ignorance prevailed almost universally, even amongst the *Romish* Clergy before the Reformation; so that when the Reformation

tion

tion happily took place, there were not a number of Men of Letters to be found in any Proportion to the number of Churches in this Kingdom ; for that Reason *Homilies* were composed for the necessary Instruction of the People, and the Assistance of those who from their Piety might be well qualified, but from their Learning not. That this was the Case most remarkably appears, even from the Authority of a Proclamation, which enjoined the Ministers of that Age diligently to read over in the Week the Homily for the next Lord's Day, that they might not commit Blunders when they came to read it to the Congregation. Seeing then that this was the avowed Case, with relation to the *Homilies*, I think it is the plainest and most rational way of accounting for the composing of *Publick Prayers*, that it was done with the same View,  
from

from an Apprehension of the same Necessity, not with an Intention that it should be drawn into a Precedent for future Ages, but only to afford present Assistance to a Body of Clergy then incapable of supporting the ministerial Character with any Reputation without it; that this was the Case in respect of *praying*, as well as *preaching*, will appear further probable, by considering the Custom (which is not now entirely worn out, though dwindled almost to nothing) for the Minister to pray without a *prescribed Form* in the Pulpit, immediately before Sermon. That this Method was originally intended to promote free and unprescribed Prayer, is what no Man I imagine can dispute, the very doing it is *ipso facto* an Acknowledgment of its *Lawfulness*, and the Institution of it was, I conceive, a manifest Testimony that the Institutors thought



thought it preferable to praying by a *prescribed Form*, and hoped that as the Learning and Capacities of the Clergy increased, the other way might be in great measure, if not totally, laid aside. And if the Dr. had been speaking of the Clergy at the times of the Reformation, I should have allowed his Distinction of *more learned*, and *more ignorant Ministers* to have been unexceptionable; for *Longland* Bishop of *Lincoln*, in a Sermon preached before *Henry VIII.* on *Good-Friday*, 1538. against the usurped Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, says, ‘ *Centurio* and those that kept Christ, to see the Execution done, cried *Vere*, &c. Now if a Bishop could be so meanly learned as to mistake *Centurio*, the Name of a military Officer, for the proper Name of a Man, we may plainly perceive that Learning was at a very low Ebb amongst the Clergy

G of

of those Days, and therefore there can be but little Reason to boast so much as some have affected to do ever since, of the Compleatness of the Liturgy compiled by the Bishops and Clergy of that Age; but it is very surprizing in the present, when the Opportunities of being learned are so remarkable, if any are admitted amongst the Clergy, who deserve the Dr's Epithet, *ignorant*. Book of Martyrs Vol. III. p. 326.

And as in my Apprehension the Dr. has paid but a very poor Compliment to his Brethren of the Clergy by representing many of them *ignorant*, so the Sentence immediately following is as unfortunately expressed with Regard to the *venerable Order* in general; *for in every Profession there are always some of inferior Genius and Capacity, and it is good for these to have such a Provision made for them*. Now as by  
Pro-

*Profession* here he can mean no other than *Trade, Occupation or Employment*, I fancy he would have taken it very heinously if another should have fallen into such an Oversight, and have been as apt as any Body to have charged him with Indecency of Language, and Disrespect to the *Gown*; but if the Dr. will consider it, he has not given any great Proof herein of his own *superior Genius and Capacity*, because there is a very wide Difference betwixt the Case of bungling Artificers, and unskilful Tradesmen, and that of Divines of *inferior Genius and Capacity*: for when a Man has served an Apprentiship to a Trade, if he turns out a very indifferent Hand, or ever so little Master of his *Profession*, 'tis impossible to hinder him from setting up his Business; but in respect to the Clergy, the Case will admit of no manner of Comparison, be-



cause after having been ever so long at the University, a Man cannot from thence assume the Office of a Minister, till he has passed the antecedent Trials which are always required, and always submitted to, before they receive *Orders* from the Bishop; as therefore they are always examined as to their Knowledge of the learned Languages, Philosophy, and Divinity, to whose Door must the Fault be laid if the Dr. can find a number of *ignorant* Men, of Men of *inferior Genius and Capacity* amongst his Brethren? 'tis very possible indeed through the Conceit, Fondness, or Avarice of Parents, that some Youths may be sent to the Universities that have no manner of Genius for Learning; and doubtless there are others that through Idleness are incapable of going through such an Examination as is absolutely necessary that all that are admitted to

*holy*

*holy Orders* should come under. And when this happens to be the Case, what is to be done? Is it not evident to a Demonstration, both from Scripture and Reason, that the Bishops to whom any such Persons apply for Ordination, ought to refuse it to both those sorts of Men? Ought they not with Compassion to advise those they apprehend incapable from a natural Defect, to betake themselves to some Business that they may have a Capacity for, and with due Severity to rebuke those who have mis-spent their Time, and not improved their Faculties, and never to accept them till by Application and Diligence they have render'd themselves capable of the Office they would undertake? And to the Honour of some of the Bishops I know this has been done. And as it is always in their Power to exclude *ignorant* Persons, or those of *inferior*  
*Genius*

*Genius and Capacity*, and the Circumstances of the established Church are so vastly different in this respect in the present Age, from what they were at the time of the Reformation, nothing can be more evident than that the Plea for having *Forms of Prayer* for the Assistance of the ignorant, and of those of inferior *Genius and Capacity* is impertinent and absurd; let me add that those that are capable of preaching, without the Help of *Homilies*, to the Edification of the People, are as capable of praying to their Edification without the Help of *prescribed Forms*.

The next Argument advanced by the Dr. in favour of his Scheme is as follows. *Moreover it better establishes and secures the Unity of Faith and Worship, hinders the Heterodox from infusing their particular Notions in their Prayers, which is perhaps the most artful and plausible way*



way of infusing them, reduces all the Churches to an Uniformity, prevents any Disagreement or Contradiction in their Petitions, and instructs them as they worship the same God, to worship him with the same Mind and Voice. And finally it is shewing to all the World the Terms of our Communion, and giving them a fair Opportunity of examining them before they join in it. Now to suppose that the enjoining of *Forms of Prayer* to be read by all Ministers will make them believe all the Principles contained in them, is just as good Sense as to suppose, that all that subscribe the *Articles* required to be subscribed, do always believe the *Doctrines* they assert; but it is very certain a Man may subscribe a Set of *Articles* or read over a *Set of Prayers*, and not believe the *Doctrines* or *Principles* they contain. How far such a Conduct is consistent with

with Sincerity ought to be considered; to me it appears to be totally subversive of it, and for that Reason I am against them both, it being an Observation that has been frequently and most justly made, that there can be no *Articles* drawn up but what an insincere Man will subscribe; and therefore *Burnet's* Exposition of the Articles is so far from deserving to be extolled as an excellent and most useful Work, as it has been by many, that it is in Effect only an Attempt to palliate Insincerity, and by the same Method as he has taken to make the Articles go down with Antipredestinarians, a Man might undertake to explain the *Koran* of *Mohammed*, so as that a Christian might subscribe it. I may add, nor can any *Forms of Prayer* be composed but what an insincere Man will read. So that *prescribed Articles and Forms* will very probably exclude  
many

many honest conscientious Men out of the Church, but prove no manner of Bar or Security against those of the contrary Character, and of course this very Argument which is produced in favour of *prescribed Prayers*, if duly regarded in its Consequences, is in Reality one of the strongest Arguments against them, for if a Minister who prays without a *Form*, mixes such Principles with his Prayers as I cannot assent to, I have an Opportunity of joining with another who introduces none but such as appear to me consistent both with *Scripture and Reason*; but in the other Case there is no possible Remedy; but if there are things unintelligible, unscriptural, or irrational, contained in those *Forms* that are *prescribed* by Power, and enforced by Penalties, I must always be disturbed with hearing them, and am sure to have my Devotion interrupted

H

rupted for longer or shorter Spaces, as they come in their turn to be repeated by the Minister, who dares not omit or alter any part of them.

What follows immediately after the last cited Passage is, *Whereas if there be no stated regular Forms, we must have a sort of implicit Faith in every Minister, assent we know not why, and pray for we know not what.* This is most absurdly and unphilosophically said, one would think a Man that is capable of talking in this lax and inaccurate manner of the Operations of the intellectual Faculties, should be very little acquainted with Reflections upon what passes in his own Breast; the *Assent* of the Mind always follows the Reality or Appearance of Truth; I would ask the Dr. whether he has it in his Power to refuse his *Assent* to the Proposition that two and two make four, or can he give his *Assent* to this,



this, two and three make six, neither is it possible that we should *pray for we know not what*. That which we have no Idea of can never be the Object of our Desire, or the Matter of our Petitions, he might as properly have said, that a conscious Being may exist without Ideas, or a rational Being without Perception.

*The Lawfulness and Expediency of set Forms of Prayer* are mentioned in the same Page. As to the *Lawfulness of set Forms of Prayer*, I allow that a Prayer is not unlawful merely because it is drawn up by another, but then that Prayer must be of the general kind; it must comprehend none of the Points that are controverted amongst Christians, neither ought it to contain any *things of doubtful Disputation*, for I hope the Dr. will agree that no sincere Minister (and without Sincerity he is no Minister at all in the Sight of

H 2                      God)

God) can with the external Marks of Solemnity and Serioufness, and with an exprefs Exhortation to the People to *accompany him with a pure Heart, and humble Voice, unto the Throne of the heavenly Grace saying after him*, pronounce those things in a professed Address to the divine Being, which he does not himself believe. A Man that is capable of acting in such a manner, deserves a worse term than any of those contemptuous ones, *Crudities, Incoherencies, Freaks, Rants, Fanaticism, Enthusiasm, &c.* which the Dr. so liberally bestows on those who pray without a *prescribed Form*; for as Actions have in many Cases as real and expressive a Language as Words, the very pronouncing an Expression in a *Form of Prayer* to which a Man gives no Assent, is downright Hypocrisy and solemn Mockery of God. And if a Man should be a-  
shamed

*shamed of appearing with undigested Crudities before his earthly Sovereign, much more ought he to be ashamed of appearing before his Heavenly Sovereign with Falshood in his Mouth, and Insincerity in his Heart, and whilst by his Actions he professes to pray to God, to have his Heart far from him. As to the Expediency of set Forms of Prayer, the great Benefit pretended by the Injunction of Forms of Prayer, and Articles of Faith, which is to have all Ministers and private Christians of that Communion of the same Opinion, is not only in effect to lay the Charge of Imperfection or Unintelligibleness, against the Revelation given us by God, not only to assume a Superiority in point of knowing the Will of God beyond even the inspired Authors of the Scriptures, not only to arrogate a Right of authoritative Determination of the Sense of holy Writ,*  
of

of which there are not the least Footsteps of a Commission being given in the Word of God, but it is in direct Consequence also to assert that it is necessary that all Christians should believe alike, whereas from the Constitution of human Nature, from the different Capacities and Opportunities Men have for Knowledge, as well as from the frequent Injunctions of *Charity* and mutual *Forbearance* in the New Testament, nothing can be more evident than that no such Uniformity of thinking was ever to be expected, nor required, and that the sublimest Character of a Christian consists in the Exercise of Candour and Affection towards those who are not of the same Sentiments with himself; hence it is declared, that without the Operation of this Virtue, all other Attainments are absolutely insignificant, *Rom. xiii.* and on this Principle



ciple is founded that most sublime and elegant Encomium given of it, *Col. iii. 14. And Charity which is the Bond of Perfection.*

There is nothing in his *general Reflections* upon the Subject that affects the Argument betwixt us, but what has been already sufficiently obviated, except the Parallel he is pleased to make betwixt the Papists and Protestant Dissenters, page 28. which is of a piece with the rest of his Discourse; and here he repeats almost *verbatim* what he had said before, a plain proof that he thinks it very nervous reasoning, the *People* (*i. e.* amongst the Dissenters) *are only Hearers, and they must hear before they can understand, and they must understand before they can approve, and they must approve before they can join in any Petition, all which is impossible to be done in an Instant while one is speaking.* How unac-

unaccountable is Bigotry and blind Zeal! Is there any greater Difficulty in *understanding* or not *understanding*, in *approving* or not *approving*, in *joining* or not *joining* in a Sentence considered as formed into a Petition, or part of a Prayer, than it is to *understand*, *approve* or *disapprove* a Sentence consider'd as part of a Sermon. It is very possible, and often complained of, that a Minister reads the Prayers with such a Rapidity of Pronunciation, not observing the proper Pauses and Periods, so as to confuse those that hear and desire to join with him, and by this Means it becomes very difficult, if not sometimes impossible, for the Congregation to keep pace with him: through this Defect the Devotion of the People is dissipated and prevented, and the Intention of their Attendance defeated. The same Observation may likewise be applied to

a Sermon which if rapidly or injudiciously pronounced, becomes disagreeable, confus'd, and often unintelligible; but I can assure the Dr. I design no personal Reflection on himself; for I understood his Sermon as well when I heard it, as I do now it is printed; I *approved* or *disapproved* as much of it then in hearing, as I do now in writing, and according to the undoubted Right of a Protestant and a *Briton*, have fairly considered his Discourse, and given the Reasons of my *Disapprobation*.

## APPENDIX I.

**I** WILL here give a short Specimen of obsolete or altered Words in the Liturgy, and would undertake to compose a Prayer out of these only, which would be unintelligible to the People, I have not touched upon Phrases, of which Numbers might be produced; and give me leave to observe to the Admirers of the Liturgy, that an obsolete Phrase, or Word, is as really unintelligible, when it occurs but once in a Page, as when you meet with it in every Line.

*Ports* for Gates, *ravish* for spoil, *bolpen* for helped, *ramping* for ravenous, *Hell* for the Grave, *waxen* for become, *lustily* for earnestly, *lusteth* for desireth, *mows* for Mouths, *communing* for conversing, *knap-peth*



*peth* for breaketh, *secretly* for inwardly, *flittings* for Wanderings, *commune* for consult, *Ground* for bottom, *refrain* for restrain, *whole* for sincere, *merrily* for chearfully, *Worship* for Honour, *knit* for unite, *plagued* for afflicted, *well liking* for flourishing, *Credence* for Belief, *Ceremonies* for Statutes, *occupied* for employed, *sore* for very much, *Health* sometimes for Salvation, and sometimes for I know not what, *Despiteness* for Malice, *abide* for bear, *laud* for praise, *Governance* for Government, *marvels* for wonders, *moveth* for exhorteth, *yield* for give, *lauding* for praising, *eschew* for avoid, *prevent* and *preventing* for assist and assisting, *Pitifulness* for Compassion, *Williness* for Craft, *further* and *furtherance* for assist and Assistance. Now if the copious and expressive Diction of the modern *English*, which as

much exceeds the Language of our Predecessors a couple of Centuries ago, as the Learning and all other Improvements of the present Age exceed theirs, if good Language be expected in a Sermon, and the Effect of it is too well known to want to be enlarged upon, why should *Publick Prayers* be continued in the uncouth Lowness, or obsolete Mustiness of two hundred Years? or is it possible to conceive that our Devotion would not be assisted and elevated by the Propriety, Intelligibleness, and Expressiveness of modern *English*?

## A P P E N D I X II.

**A**S I did not see the Dr's. Fast-Sermon till the Answer to the other was drawn up, I will here take Notice of a couple of Passages in that, which I think ought not to pass

pass unobserved; the first is in p. 94. I cannot but congratulate the Dissenters, and myself amongst them, that however roughly the Dr. has used us in his Sermon on the Liturgy, so that I was afraid he had thought us a mere Nuisance in Society, he has at length found us to be good for something, has done us the Honour to call us *Brethren*, and *trusts we will unite as Brethren, not only upon the present, but upon all future Occasions for the Publick Good, and watch and guard against Popery, which would equally destroy us both.* I own I am much better pleased to hear him say so, than as some of his Brethren have often said, that they had rather be Papists than Presbyterians; one would be tempted to think that he had dropped a good deal of his Rigour, and as he honours us with the Title of *Brethren*, and acknowledges his  
 Hopes



Hopes that we would unite both in the Defence of our selves and the Church, against the Common Enemy, that we might hope for the future to be treated in a manner that Friends ought to expect; but I am afraid we ought not to be too sanguine in our Expectations of this kind; there is abundance of Difference betwixt a Man's calling out for the Assistance of a Neighbour when his House is on Fire, and doing Justice afterwards in a Point contested betwixt that Man and his Neighbour. This is not the first time when the Church of *England* has been in imminent Danger of the coming in of Popery. In *James* the 2d's Reign it was as much in Danger, and their Divines then professed a great Sorrow for past Rigour, and a great Disposition to *come to a Temper* with the Dissenters. But as soon as the Clouds of Danger, with which



which they were threatned, were dispers'd by the Revolution, their Moderation also vanished, and even the bare Toleration we enjoy has been the Subject of Complaints with many of them ever since.

But if the Dr. be in earnest in his late professed Affection for his *Brethren the Dissenters*, whose Help he was willing to accept in time of *Danger*, and in which he *trusted*, he will now have an Opportunity of contributing to restore them to the Possession of what they have as natural a Right to as *Britons*, and as great Reason to expect as good Subjects, as any whatsoever, but he will also therein conduce to the reforming of one of the most heinous and aggravated of these national Sins, which all good Christians have the greatest Cause to deplore, and to use their utmost Interest to reform.

The

The other thing that I shall take Notice of is, that the Dr. has with great Justice exposed and condemned some of our national Vices, as *the great Decay of publick Virtue, and the Love of our Country*, p. 87. and *the Luxury* and Dissoluteness of the Age. p. 91. he justly inveighs against vicious Self-Love under the former Head, against Depravity and Corruption of Manners under the latter, but has omitted the grand *national Sin* of all, and that which ought to be stigmatiz'd as the Mother in great Measure of all other *Abominations*, I mean the *Sacramental Test*: As a Dissenter I look upon it as an unjust Abridgment of the *natural Rights* of our whole Body, of whom it may be said with *Modesty* and *Truth*, that they are at least as good Members of the Commonwealth, and as good Subjects of the Royal Family that are so happily

pily fettled on the Throne, as those of the established Church, and therefore have an equal Right to expect the same Advantages of Civil Society, and notwithstanding the long Continuance of this oppressive and injurious Law ; though they had just Reason to Hope that their unmerited Fetters would long ago have been taken off, yet nothing has staggered their *unalterable Loyalty*, but they have still the Honour of being able to repeat what they so justly gloried in on occasion of the last, that in the present most unnatural and traitorous Rebellion not a single Dissenter has been engaged in it.

Thus if the *Test* be consider'd in the Light of the Law of Nature, and in Consistency with all the valuable Ends of Civil or national Societies, the great Design of which is to secure to all useful Members of the Community the equal Enjoyment

K of



of Liberty, both Religious and Civil, and an equal Capacity of discharging the Offices of the Commonwealth, when the Government thinks them qualified for any of them by their Ability and Integrity, without being fetter'd with negative Discouragements, and undeserved Exclusions; nothing can be more evident to every honest and impartial Mind, than that the Test Act is most injurious and oppressive.

But if we view it in the Light of Christianity, and consider, as every consistent Christian will, how it agrees with the genuine Spirit and intention of the Gospel, we shall find it to be totally subversive of it, nothing can be more evident than that the Lord's Supper was instituted purely for spiritual Purposes, to commemorate the Example, Sufferings, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and Intercession of our blessed Redeemer,  
and



and thereby to incite Christians to a Life of Faith and Piety, as the Ground of their Acceptance with God, as well as of their Admission to the Communion of the Church of Christ in this Sacrament, *which being so divine and comfortable a Thing to them who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them that will presume to receive it unworthily, my Duty* (says the Minister of the establish'd Church, when giving Warning for the celebration of the holy Communion) *is to exhort you in the mean Season to consider the Dignity of that holy Mystery, and the great Peril of the unworthy receiving thereof, and so to search and examine your own Consciences, that ye may come holy and clean to such a heavenly Feast.* And as it is the indispensable Duty of every one that comes to the Lord's Supper, to follow such Exhortations, it is mani-

festly as incumbent on the Minister  
 that is to administer it, to admit no  
 Person of a notoriously profane and  
 wicked Character to partake of it,  
 but that Multitudes of such are ad-  
 mitted, who are induced by the  
 mere Lucre of an Office, who ne-  
 ver did receive it before, nor ever  
 repeat it, except the Qualification  
 for a new Post requires it, is a Fact  
 that cannot be ~~disputed~~<sup>at Test</sup>. The Sa-  
 crament is therefore a double Profa-  
 nation of this sacred Ordinance, as it  
 is a Prostitution of what was institu-  
 ted by Christ for spiritual Purposes,  
 to a mere Qualification for a tem-  
 poral Office ; and as it is the means  
 of admitting to the Table of the  
 Lord many that are unworthy of  
 the Name of Christians, and of some  
 who even deny Christianity to be a  
 Revelation from God. And yet,  
 most shocking and most deplorable  
 to think on, that very Body of Cler-  
 gy

gy who, as Christians, ought to look upon this Law as the greatest Dishonour to divine Revelation as well as the greatest Infringement of their unquestionable Right both from Reason and Scripture, are the grand Opposers of the Repeal of this unrighteous and detestable Act, as repugnant to the Christian Religion, as to the Birth-right of *Britons*. And as they may be justly challenged to produce any greater Causes of the Propagation of Immorality and Infidelity amongst us, than their Subscription to Articles, which they do not believe, and their Admission of those to the Lord's Supper, whom they know to be unworthy, let them no longer lament the Increase of Vice, or the Growth of Deism, but reflect upon the Saying of one of the Popes, which I can assure them is frequently applied to them by the Deists: *Quantum lucri nobis tulit, &c.*

F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

**L**ATELY published by the Author, and to be had of *M. Cooper* in *Paternoster-Row*; The Human Barometer, or living Weather-Glass; a philosophic Poem.

— *Et quæ Natura negabat  
Visibus humanis Oculis ea pectoris  
haufit.* Ovid.

Price 1 s.

And—A Vindication of Revealed Religion, in Answer to Mr. *Chubb's Enquiry into the Ground and Foundation of Religion*: Being an Attempt to prove that the instituting of *Positive Precepts*, and the Scheme of Salvation through a Mediator, are not contrary to Reason, nor inconsistent with the Law of Nature.

Price 1 s.

10 JA 66



